



Bosnia UPDATE

A Summary of Developments Affecting the Balkans and the Deployment of U.S. Armed Forces Prepared by the Chairman of the Committee on National Security.

Lloyd Spence, Chairman

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Quotes of the Week:

"We've got some jerk up there pulling a trigger and he's got a nightscope. But... if we do see him he had better be fast and be clad in bullet-proof stuff because we will attack without warning."

-- Admiral Leighton Smith, IFOR commander, commenting on sniper attacks, 2/1/96

"The mines are going to be a terrible, terrible problem for us.... We are going to see more mine accidents. Count on it."

-- Admiral Smith, 2/1/96

"On the force withdrawal, we are seeing compliance across the board."

-- U.S. official, 2/3/96

"This agreement is illegal and violates the spirit of Dayton. We want the Serb police and authorities to leave now."

-- Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, commenting on an extension of the deadline for Serb authorities to leave Sarajevo suburbs, 2/4/96

"The tension is increasing and we are all working as hard as we can to get the temperature down."

-- NATO official, 2/7/96

"I am stronger than Deng Xiaoping."

-- Bosnian Serb military leader and indicted war criminal Ratko Mladic, 2/9/96

In Bosnia and the Balkans:

IFOR commander Admiral Leighton Smith says that the number of naval and air support forces operating in the Bosnia theater is being reduced. He states that a draw down of forces within Bosnia will be considered once all U.S. forces have been deployed. The deployment, he notes, was deliberately intended to be larger than necessary as insurance against unforeseen military contingencies.

An American soldier becomes the first U.S. fatality in Bosnia after picking up an explosive device at a checkpoint near Gradacac, 25 miles north of Tuzla.

Two U.S. soldiers are wounded after stepping on a land mine in Hadizici, 10 miles southeast of Tuzla. NATO says the accident occurred during a joint U.S.-Bosnian Serb inspection of a minefield that had supposedly been cleared. Three other U.S. soldiers are injured in a road accident during a snowstorm in north-eastern Bosnia.

French Special Forces troops kill one sniper and capture another in the Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza. Sniping incidents become more frequent in the Serb-held areas of

Sarajevo scheduled to be transferred to Muslim control. Admiral Smith says anti-sniping teams are being deployed to areas of concern.

The "Bridge of Brotherhood and Unity" is reopened in Sarajevo, reuniting residents on both sides of the divided city.

A Saudi official says Saudi Arabia financed a \$300 million covert arms shipment program to Bosnia over the past three years in violation of the U.N. arms embargo and with the tacit approval of the United States. A White House official calls the statement "preposterous and insulting," adding, "We have not in any way coordinated, endorsed, or in any other way encouraged other countries to violate the arms embargo."

NATO SACEUR, General George Joulwan, says the deployment of troops to Bosnia is going "extremely well." The number of NATO troops deployed in the former Yugoslavia now stands at 57,000.

In a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Christopher, Bosnian President Izetbegovic again pledges to remove foreign forces from Bosnia, but refuses to say when this will occur.

NATO forces investigate an abandoned mineshaft suspected of be-

ing a mass grave site, raising concerns among officials over "mission creep." A NATO spokesman says news of the operation "turned out to be slightly embarrassing" in light of NATO's reluctance to get involved in this aspect of the peace mission.

Bosnian government forces arrest eight Bosnian Serb soldiers accused of war crimes, including two top Serb officers. Bosnian Serbs break off all dealings with the Muslim-led government and with IFOR and halt the free movement of civilians in retaliation. Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, on a visit to Bosnia, calls for the release of one of the officers. Contact with IFOR is restored after the Bosnian government releases four of the eight. The two senior Serb officers are transferred to the custody of the War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague.

On a visit to Bosnia, JCS Chairman Shalikashvili warns that threats to IFOR personnel will not be tolerated.

Muslim women refugees from Srebrenica blockade roads in Tuzla, stone cars, and break building windows in a protest to demand information on some 8,000 Muslim men who disappeared after the Serb takeover of Srebrenica last summer.

The Bosnian government calls for the disarming of Bosnian Serb police officers that it says are really soldiers in police uniforms.

U.S. officials, including Richard Holbrooke and Robert Gallucci, travel to Bosnia in an effort to defuse tensions and ensure compliance with the Dayton agreement.

Bosnian Serb leader and indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic makes a public appearance in Banja

Luka, challenging threats to arrest him. His motorcade is allowed to pass through Russian, Italian, and American checkpoints.

Croatian protesters take to the street in Mostar to oppose reunification of the divided city under a plan worked out by European Union administrator Hans Koschnick.

U.N. officials report that 12,000 of the estimated 70,000 Serb residents of Sarajevo's suburbs have left in advance of the deadline for removal of Serb forces from the area.

Serbian President Milosevic agrees to allow War Crimes Tribunal investigators to open an office in Belgrade.

The International Committee of the Red Cross says Bosnian Serbs are forcing hundreds of people in Serb-held territories throughout Bosnia to work as slave laborers.

In Washington:

Six House Republicans question President Clinton's deployment of 500 U.S. peacekeepers to Macedonia without prior Congressional approval.

A U.S. official says Secretary of Defense Perry is considering the transfer of \$100 million worth of U.S. arms and equipment to Bosnia.

In Bonn:

U.N. special envoy for human rights, Elizabeth Rehn, estimates that there may be between 200 and 300 mass graves in Bosnia. She criticizes IFOR for not insuring that suspected grave sites are protected against tampering.

Compliance Watch:

Military forces of the Bosnian factions withdraw from nine areas throughout Bosnia, in compliance with the deadline for removal of their forces and military equipment from these areas. Serb forces withdraw from the suburbs of Sarajevo.

A U.N. official reports widespread arson and looting is occurring in many areas where opposing forces are withdrawing. Croat forces are said to have destroyed much of the area around Mrkonjic Grad and Sipovo in the northwest part of the country. Bosnian Serb troops are reported to have burned much of Ocak, in northeastern Bosnia, as well as homes in the corridor between Sarajevo and Gorazde.

IFOR ground forces commander, Lieutenant General Michael Walker, calls the Bosnian Serb's severing of contacts with IFOR "ominous" and a "direct breach" of the peace agreement.

Two British soldiers are injured by snipers in Ilidza. A U.S. Army vehicle is also struck by sniper fire, but no casualties are reported.

An agreement brokered by High Representative for Bosnia Carl Bildt allows Bosnian Serb policemen to remain in the Sarajevo suburbs for 45 days beyond the deadline for transfer of control to Muslim authority. Bosnian President Izetbegovic says the agreement represents a "wrong interpretation" of the Dayton accord and declares that "the presence of Serb police for another 45 days is illegal."

Major General Michael Wilcocks, Chief of Staff of NATO ground forces in Bosnia, says there have been 40 violations in the past few weeks of the zone of separation by the various armed Bosnian factions. In all cases, he notes, IFOR removed the forces from the zone and seized their weapons. Six hundred of the seized weapons have been destroyed.

U.S. Special Forces investigate reports that a steel plant in Zenica is being used to produce weapons in violation of the Dayton agreement.

Additional background information on any of the items in this UPDATE may be obtained from Tom Donnelly (x65372) or David Trachtenberg (x60532) on the staff of the House National Security Committee.